

# Neuroinclusivity in Housing | Helpful Terminology

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People bring different levels of understanding and experience to the topic of neuroinclusive housing. Shared language will help us to communicate and work together. Many different definitions can be found for each of the following terms, each with slightly different nuances. We have selected the following definitions to support discussion and working together.

## This section will provide definitions for:

- Neurodiversity
- Neurodivergent
- Neuroinclusive Housing
- Housing Ecosystem
- Housing Continuum
- Core Housing Need
- Affordable Housing
- Social Housing
- Market Housing
- Mixed Market Housing

### Neurodiversity:

Is a term that acknowledges that all brains work a bit differently. These differences are natural, expected and offer valuable contributions to our society.

### Neurodivergent:

Refers to a person or group, whose brain(s) process information similarly, but in a way that is different from the majority of people. Autism is one type of neurodivergence. Other examples of neurodivergent groups include those who stutter, have attention deficit hyperactivity, and Tourettes syndrome. 1 in 5 people are neurodivergent.

### Neuroinclusive Housing:

In housing, neuroinclusivity means that neurodivergent people are supported in finding, accessing, maintaining, and thriving in homes that address their wants and needs.

### Housing Ecosystem:

A housing ecosystem includes all the people and organizations in a community who have a role in housing. The Neuroinclusivity in Housing Team at the Accessibility Institute at Carleton University created a housing ecosystem [graphic](#) to help people understand their role and the role of others in the housing ecosystem. The hope is that by learning more about the different roles and how they interact within the ecosystem, we can work better together.



## Housing Continuum:

The housing continuum describes the range of housing types available in a community — from emergency shelter on one end, all the way to homeownership on the other. In between lies an assortment of housing options and types, each critically important for different people at different times.



## Core Housing Need:

A household is said to be in 'core housing need' if their housing falls below at least one of the adequacy, affordability or suitability standards and would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing that is acceptable (meets all three housing standards). A 2023 Housing Needs Assessment by the City of Calgary found that 1 in 5 households in Calgary cannot afford their housing.

## Affordable Housing:

Housing affordability is commonly defined as spending up to 30% of before tax income on housing. Some affordable housing providers advertise near or 10% below market rental units as affordable. Because income varies widely, defining affordable housing as 30% of before tax income can lead to confusion. Using consistent, clear terminology will ensure understanding between stakeholders. Affordable housing for a person receiving income assistance for a disability in Canada is around \$500 per month.

## Social Housing:

Social housing is a housing development that government subsidizes and that either government or a non-profit housing partner owns and/or operates. Rent supplements may also be a part of social housing.

## Market Housing:

Housing that is privately owned by an individual (or a company) who generally does not receive direct subsidies to purchase or maintain it. Prices are set by the private market.

## Mixed Income Housing:

Mixed-income housing integrates different rental rates for units, from subsidized affordable housing to near-market rates. By offering some units at near-market rates, housing providers can offset the operating costs of the lower-rate units. There are no differences in quality between units offered at higher or lower rates.